

# Why You Should Run Away

*Editor's Pick. Written by Paul Rosenberg.*

One of the more instructive experiences of my life occurred when was when I was a teenager, barely sixteen years old.

My dad, whom I had previously considered to be incredibly over-protective, put me on a cross-country bus and sent me, alone, to visit my grandmother, some two thousand miles away.

For two straight days I was on my own, surrounded by people I had never met, in places I'd never been, and thrown into situations that I could never have expected. The experience did something to me: I learned about a strange world and how to get along in it, alone, with no one to run to.

The benefits I felt from this trip didn't have to do with traveling. This wasn't about getting from point A to point B - this was about wandering through the unknown. And that was an idea that rather bothered me.

During my youth, there was a common idea that moving around was a bad thing. You were supposed to stay in your place unless you had a good reason to do otherwise. People who moved around were considered suspicious and even dangerous. The benefit that I felt from wandering clashed with what I had been taught.

When I returned home from this journey, I returned to the regular American distractions of sports, school, and all the other shiny objects that grab at young people's minds. But I never forgot the strange feeling that stuck with me from that journey.

Sometime later, I came across a passage in Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

*I rather would entreat you to see the wonders of the world abroad, than, living dully, sluggardized at home, wear out your youth in shapeless idleness.*

That wasn't precisely what I had felt on my adventure, but it was close. It would be some years before I would travel seriously, but I decided right then and there that I would make it my life's goal to see the world.

That experience, which I've come to call *The Strangest Secret*, is not unlike Earl Nightingale's message of the same name. Both concepts lead to a rich and fulfilling life.

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